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House of Representatives

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my condolences on the passing of a giant in the Durham, North Carolina community – a trailblazer – one who dedicated her life to improving health outcomes for disadvantaged citizens, including veterans.

This trailblazer was my friend, Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum. Sharon passed away on Sunday, January 3rd, 2016, at the young age of 58, just two days before her birth date. We lost this giant far too soon, but not before she revolutionized the delivery of care for those in need through the founding of Durham's first free-standing comprehensive healthcare clinic called "Healing with CAARE." My first visit as Durham's congressman was an enlightening visit to CAARE. I saw Sharon at work; I saw paid staff but I also saw dozens of community volunteers.

We mourn this tremendous loss, but we also celebrate Sharon's remarkable life that was replete with the success that many can only hope to achieve. Born in Durham, Sharon Elliott-Bynum was a graduate of Northern High School, Durham Technical Institute, the Watts School of Nursing, and my alma mater, North Carolina Central University. She also received a Master's degree and Ph.D. from Victory International College.

Sharon was a dedicated member of a great sorority – Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. As a member of the Durham Alumnae Chapter (founded 1931) she led by example. Sharon was also a member of National Council of Negro Women, Sigma Theta Tau International, Top Ladies of Distinction, and many more service organizations. Finally, she was a faithful member of Faith Assembly Christian Center in Durham.

Dr. Elliott-Bynum was drawn to the field of nursing when she, at age 16, began volunteering at historic Lincoln Community Health Center. Sharon's volunteerism motivated her to pursue a nursing career. In 1995, Dr. Elliott-Bynum and her late sister, Pat, founded *Healing with CAARE, Inc.*

What began as a non-profit community based provider of services for individuals living with HIV expanded to be the primary healthcare home for more than 1,000 individuals living with cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. CAARE also provides free dental care, substance abuse counseling, a food pantry, and free housing for homeless veterans.

Her remarkable work has been honored over the years through many awards and recognitions. They include The Order of the Long Leaf Pine which is the highest civilian honor presented by the Governor, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Veteran's Braintrust Award, the NCCU Distinguished Alumni Award, and the Durham Chamber of Commerce Women's Leadership Award.

Dr. Elliott-Bynum's lifetime of tireless work in service to thousands of disadvantaged individuals had an immeasurable impact on the Durham Community – a grateful community that joins me today in celebrating this life.

I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our recognition to Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum's two children, Ebony Elliott-Covington and Damien Elliott-Bynum; her brother, Joe Elliott, Jr.; sisters, Carolyn Hinton and Addie Mann, her grandson Ahmad, the CAARE family, and all those who have been impacted by her extraordinary work. Some of the family members are with us today.

Mr. Speaker, on tomorrow I will say a few words at the Celebration of Life service by making a plain but profound point.

Durham, North Carolina is a better place to live and work because of the unselfish service of Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum.

A life well lived.